

## One Final Note...

It is against the law to ride a bicycle under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. (21200.0 VC)



CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

CHP 909 (6/09) OPI 015  
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# Bicycle Riding



- Common causes of bicycle accidents
  - Theft precautions
  - The laws
- Bicycle registration
- Equipment requirements
- Safety Tips



## COMMON CAUSES OF BICYCLE ACCIDENTS



- Bicycle rider using the wrong side of the road.
- Auto driver making unsafe left or right turn.
- Bicyclist riding from driveway or sidewalk into path of car.
- Auto driver opening door as bicycle passes.
- Bicycle rider weaving, leaving edge of road or bike lane.
- Bicyclist making unsafe left turn.
- Bicycle without headlight or reflectors.



## HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE LAW?

Try to answer the questions below. Answers are printed upside down at the bottom of the page. Numbers in parentheses refer to Vehicle Code section. (No fair peeking!)

1. A bicycle rider should ride facing traffic. (21202)  
- True - False
2. Handlebars must be positioned so the bicycle operator's hands are not elevated above the level of his or her shoulders when grasping the normal steering grip area. (21201(b))  
- True - False
3. It's OK to let a friend ride on the handlebars, as long as you stay within three blocks of home. (21204 (b))  
- True - False
4. Riding with no hands is allowed when your arms are so full of bundles that you can't reach the handlebars, if your bicycle is not equipped with a basket or carrying rack. (21205)  
- True - False
5. During darkness, every bicycle operated on a public street must be equipped with a headlamp that can be seen for 300 feet to the front and sides of the bicycle. (21201 (d))  
- True - False
6. It's all right to hold on to the back of a motor vehicle and be pulled on a bicycle or coaster provided the vehicle is driven by your parents. (21203)  
- True - False
7. A bike rider must stop at stop signs. (21200)  
- True - False
8. A lawfully equipped bicycle must have a brake that permits the rider to make one braked wheel skid on dry, level, clean pavement. (21201 (a))  
- True - False
9. During darkness, every bicycle operated on a public street must have reflectors on each side; white or yellow forward of center and white or red rear of center, unless the bicycle is equipped with reflectorized tires. (21201 (d))  
- True - False
10. A bicycle rider must ride upon or astride a regular permanent seat. (21204 (a))  
- True - False
11. A bicycle rider can wear headsets over both ears. (27400)  
- True - False

### Answers

1. False 2. True 3. False 4. False 5. True 6. False 7. True 8. True 9. True 10. True 11. False

## WHY SHOULD I REGISTER MY BICYCLE?

- A license sticker in plain view might discourage a would-be thief.
- If your bike is stolen your chances of getting it back are better if it is recorded.



## WHAT ABOUT LOCAL LAWS?

Some cities and counties prohibit riding bicycles on sidewalks. Other local laws deal with parking of bikes and use of pedestrian or special bicycle facilities. Check with your local government to learn what these laws are.

This pamphlet gives you important information about bicycle safety. Knowing what to do on your bike can save you money, save you from injury and even save your life. A good understanding of bicycle safety lets you ride with greater confidence and enjoyment.

## WHAT ARE THE LAWS?

Bicycle riders and automobile drivers follow the same rules and have the same rights. Example: Cars must stop at a stop sign and bicycles must stop at a stop sign. **Always ride with traffic.** Bicyclists must travel in the same direction as cars.



**1** When moving slower than the normal traffic speed, stay near the right edge of the road, except:

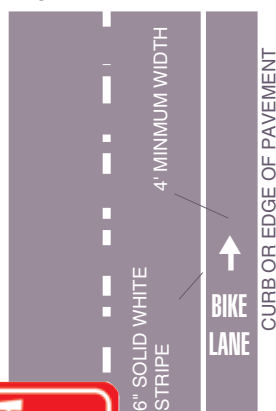
- a. When passing another bicycle or vehicle.
- b. When getting ready to turn left.
- c. When passing a parked car or to avoid other objects.
- d. When on a one-way road, two lanes or wider. Then bicyclists may ride near either the left or right side.



2

**Whenever there is a bike lane, you must use it if you are moving slower than normal traffic speed. Leave the lane only:**

- When necessary to pass another bicycle, vehicle or pedestrian.
- When getting ready to turn left.
- When necessary to avoid parked cars or other objects.



3

**Keep at least one hand on the handlebars. Bicyclists must ride on a permanently attached seat. Carry no passengers unless there is a separate seat.**

A passenger must ride on a separate seat – no riders on handle-bars. A youngster 4 years or younger, or weighing 40 pounds or less, must ride on a seat which holds the child in place and protects the youngster from moving parts. The child must also wear an approved helmet.



## MAINTENANCE

**Bicycles require routine maintenance to assure proper operation.**

### Things you can check while riding:

- Listen for sounds of rubbing, squeaks and rattles and immediately investigate their source.
- Slipping (free wheeling) or difficulty changing gears may mean that the gear cable tension is too loose or too tight (multi-speed bikes).
- Loose tension on the drive chain.
- Brake effectiveness.

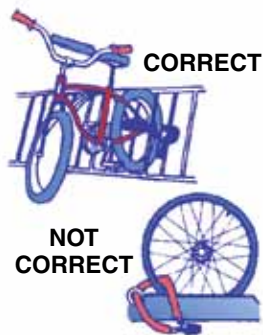
### Things you can do yourself:

- Use a tire gauge to check tires every few days. Proper pressure is indicated on the tire sidewall or in your bicycle manual. Check for cracks, cuts, bulges. Remove imbedded stones, nails, glass, etc.
- Adjust seat and handlebars to fit.
- Lightly oil and clean moving parts. Keep oil off rubber. Wipe off excess oil.
- Tighten and/or adjust loose parts.
- Make sure handle grips are glued or tightly secured to handlebars.
- Where possible, store your bike indoors; moisture will cause rust.
- Keep your bicycle clean by wiping dust away with a soft cloth. Wipe it dry when it gets wet.

Bicycle shops can supply the parts you need to maintain your bicycle.

## THEFT PRECAUTIONS

- Always lock your bike when leaving it.
- Use a strong chain and padlock.
- Secure the frame of the bike to something solid (bike rack, tree, etc.).
- Jot down the license number, the frame serial number, and the type of model of the bike. Keep the note in a safe place. If the bike is stolen, you will need to identify it.
- Park your bike where it can be easily seen.



## DO I HAVE TO REGISTER MY BICYCLE?

You must register your bike if your community requires it. Many cities and counties do. Usually, you can register at the local fire or police station. Call your city hall or county office to be sure.



# 4

Give proper hand signals when turning or stopping. Correct signals are:

- a. Left turn – Left arm straight out pointing left.
- b. Right turn – Left arm pointed straight up, or right arm straight out pointing right.
- c. Stop – Left arm pointed straight down.



LEFT RIGHT STOPPING

# 5

Before leaving a lane, give a hand signal. Leave the lane only when safe to do so.

Never hitch rides by hanging onto or attaching your bicycle to a moving vehicle.

# 6

# 7

Bicyclists may not ride on most freeways. Signs at freeway ramps tell when bicyclists must not enter.

Never leave your bicycle blocking a sidewalk.

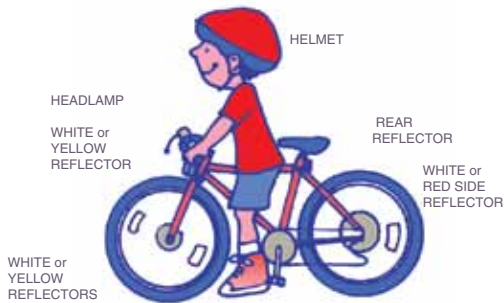
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Bicycles must be correctly equipped. (See equipment section.)

# 10

Headphones covering both ears may not be worn while operating a bicycle.



## WHAT ARE THE EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS?

### ■ Helmet

A person under 18 years of age cannot operate a bicycle or ride as a passenger without a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet that meets the standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or the SNELL Standards for Protective Headgear.

### ■ Handlebar

Must be set so that your hands are no higher than your shoulders when you hold the regular steering grip area.

### ■ Bicycle Size

Must not be so big that operator can't safely stop bicycle upright with at least one foot on ground.

### ■ Brakes

Must be able to make one wheel skid on clean, level, dry pavement.

### ■ Night Riding

Bicycle must be equipped with the following:

#### Light

A white headlamp, attached to the bicycle or your body, visible from 300 feet to the front and from the sides.

#### Reflectors:

- a. Red rear reflector.
- b. White or yellow reflectors on front and back of each pedal.
- c. White or yellow reflectors on each side forward of center of bike, and red or white reflectors on each side rear of center – usually mounted on wheel spokes (If you have reflectorized tires in front and rear, you do not need side reflectors.)



## SAFETY TIPS

- Cross sewer gratings and railroad tracks at a 90 degree angle.
- Stay in single file when riding with others.
- Cross busy intersections by walking your bicycle.
- Wear shoes – avoid getting toes caught in moving parts.
- Avoid long skirts and flare pants. Clasp pants to legs with clips or leg bands.
- Clip or band hair to keep it from blocking vision. Avoid scarves which can flap over eyes.
- Wear proper safety equipment at all times; i.e., bright clothing, approved bicycle helmet, safety goggles, etc.